AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A food roasting apparatus, comprising:

an elongate rigid rod having a handle attached to a first end and having a second end opposite said first end, said rod defining a rod longitudinal axis; ~~and~~

a basket attached to said second end of said rod and defining a basket longitudinal axis, said basket having a wire-frame construction;

wherein said basket includes a tubular configuration having a continuous side wall and a closed distal end relative to said handle and defining an open proximal end through which food may be inserted or removed;

wherein said basket includes:

a first basket member and a second basket member hingedly coupled to said first basket member;

a trigger coupled to said rod adjacent said handle; and

a linkage operatively connecting said trigger with said first and second basket members for selectively moving said first and second basket members between open and closed configurations;

wherein said linkage includes:

a pushrod connected to said trigger, such that operation of said trigger moves said pushrod between a first position and a second position;

a rotating arm connected to said pushrod and pivotally connected to said rod, such that movement of said pushrod causes said rotating arm to rotate;

a fork with a track coupled to said rotating arm such that said rotating arm slides in said track, a rotation of said rotating arm causing said fork to move perpendicular to said rod longitudinal axis; and

wherein said rod includes an offset portion proximate said second end connecting said rod to said side wall of said basket such that said rod longitudinal axis is inline with said basket longitudinal axis during rotation of said rod about said rod longitudinal axis.

2. (canceled)

3. (canceled)

4. (canceled)

5. (original) The food roasting apparatus as in claim 1 wherein said handle is constructed of a material that is slow to conduct heat.

6. (canceled)

7. (canceled)

8. (original) The food roasting apparatus as in claim 1 further comprising:

a sleeve coupled to said rod for slidable movement therealong;

a post having a pointed end for ground penetration; and

a clamp assembly coupled to said post for slidable vertical movement therealong, said clamp assembly having means for releasably capturing said sleeve, whereby said rod is slidably movable relative to said sleeve to a desired horizontal position.

9. (original) The food roasting apparatus as in claim 8 wherein said post defines a vertical axis when positioned in the ground and said clamp assembly selectively rotates about said vertical axis defined by said post.

10. (original) The food roasting apparatus as in claim 1 wherein said basket is removably attached to said second end of said rod.

11. (canceled)

12. (previously amended) A food roasting apparatus, comprising:

an elongate rigid rod having a first end and a second end opposite said first end, said rod defining a rod longitudinal axis;

a handle attached to said first end of said rod, said handle being constructed of a material that is slow to conduct heat;

a basket removably attached to said second end of said rod and defining a basket longitudinal axis, said basket having a wire-frame construction; ~~and~~

wherein said rod includes an offset portion at said second end connecting said rod to said side wall of said basket such that said rod longitudinal axis is inline with said basket longitudinal axis during rotation of said rod about said rod longitudinal axis;

a sleeve coupled to said rod for slidable movement therealong;

a post having a pointed end for ground penetration;

a clamp assembly coupled to said post for slidable vertical movement therealong, said clamp assembly having means for releasably capturing said sleeve, whereby said rod is slidably movable relative to said sleeve to a desired horizontal position;

wherein said basket includes:

a first basket member and a second basket member hingedly coupled to said first basket member;

a trigger coupled to said rod adjacent said handle;

a linkage operatively connecting said trigger with said first and second basket members for selectively moving said first and second basket members between open and closed configurations;

wherein said linkage includes:

a pushrod connected to said trigger, such that operation of said trigger moves said pushrod between a first position and a second position;

a rotating arm connected to said pushrod and pivotally connected to said rod, such that movement of said pushrod causes said rotating arm to rotate;

a fork with a track coupled to said rotating arm such that said rotating arm slides in said track, a rotation of said rotating arm causing said fork to move perpendicular to said rod longitudinal axis;

a link connected to said first and second basket members and releasably connected to said fork, such that movement of said fork away from said rod longitudinal axis causes said link to move away from said rod longitudinal axis and separate said first and second basket members; and

a spring connected to said trigger for normally biasing said pushrod toward said first position when said trigger is not being operated by a user.

13. (canceled)

14. (previously amended) The food roasting apparatus as in claim 12 wherein said post defines a vertical axis when positioned in the ground and said clamp assembly selectively rotates about said vertical axis defined by said post.

15. (canceled)

16. (canceled)

17. (canceled)

18. (canceled)

19. (canceled)

20. (previously added) A food roasting apparatus, comprising:

an elongate rigid rod having a first end and a second end opposite said first end, said rod defining a rod longitudinal axis;

a handle attached to said first end of said rod, said handle being constructed of a material that is slow to conduct heat;

a basket removably attached to said second end of said rod and defining a basket longitudinal axis, said basket having a wire-frame construction; ~~and~~

wherein said rod includes an offset portion at said second end connecting said rod to said side wall of said basket such that said rod longitudinal axis is inline with said basket longitudinal axis during rotation of said rod about said rod longitudinal axis;

a sleeve coupled to said rod for slidable movement therealong;

a post having a pointed end for ground penetration;

a clamp assembly coupled to said post for slidable vertical movement therealong, said clamp assembly having means for releasably capturing said sleeve, whereby said rod is slidably movable relative to said sleeve to a desired horizontal position;

wherein said basket includes:

a first basket member and a second basket member slidably coupled to said first basket member;

a trigger coupled to said rod adjacent said handle; and

a linkage operatively connecting said trigger with said first and second basket members for selectively moving said first and second basket members between open and closed configurations;

wherein said linkage includes:

a pushrod connected to said trigger, such that operation of said trigger moves said pushrod between a first position and a second position;

a rotating arm connected to said pushrod and pivotally connected to said rod, such that movement of said pushrod causes said rotating arm to rotate;

a fork with a track coupled to said rotating arm such that said rotating arm slides in said track, a rotation of said rotating arm causing said fork to move perpendicular to said rod longitudinal axis;

a link connected to said first and second basket members and releasably connected to said fork, such that movement of said fork away from said rod longitudinal axis causes said link to move away from said rod longitudinal axis and separate said first and second basket members; and

a spring connected to said trigger, such that said pushrod is maintained in said first position when said trigger is not being operated by a user.